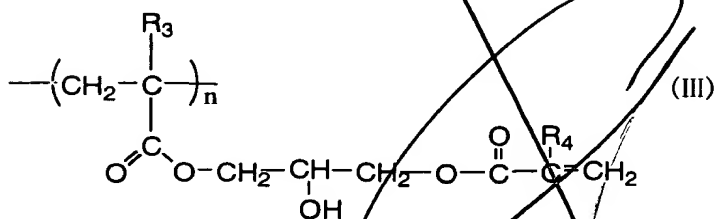
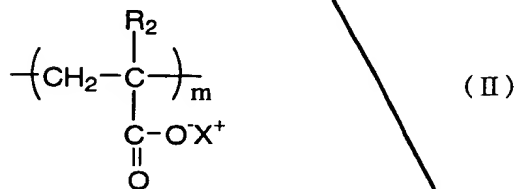
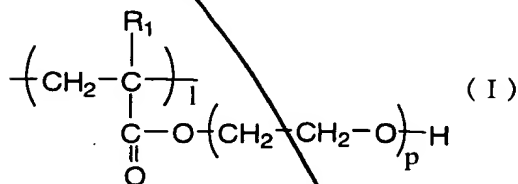
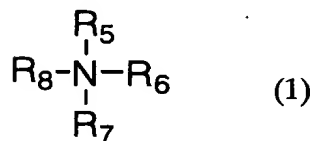


What is Claimed is:

1. A polymer compound containing monomer units represented by formulas (I) to (III):



wherein each of R₁ to R₄ is hydrogen and/or a methyl group; p represents an integer between 1 to 10 inclusive; X represents hydrogen, an alkali metal, or an ammonium represented by formula (1):

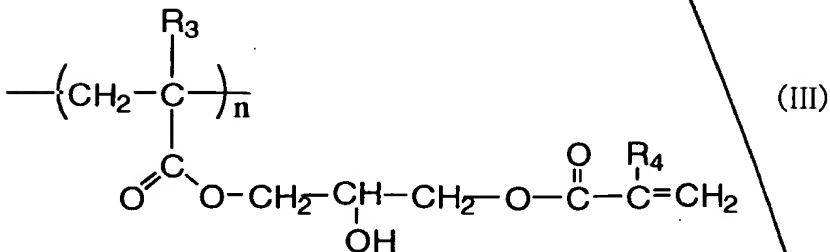
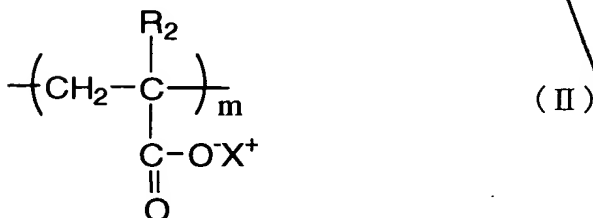


wherein each of R₅ to R₈ represents hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkyl group, or a C1-C3 alkanol group; and a plurality of Xs may be

[illegible]

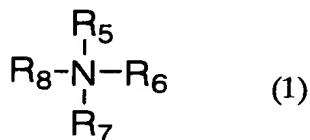
2 mol% $\leq l \leq 73$ mol%; 8 mol% $\leq m \leq 83$ mol%; and 15 mol% $\leq n \leq 80$ mol%.

2. A polymer compound according to claim 1 also containing a monomer unit other than monomer units represented by formula (I) to (III) in an amount of 10 mol% or less.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{R}_1 \\ | \\ (\text{CH}_2-\text{C})_I \\ | \\ \text{C}-\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{O})_p-\text{H} \\ || \\ \text{O} \end{array} \quad (\text{I})$$


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represents an integer between 1 to 10 inclusive; X represents hydrogen, an alkali metal, or an ammonium represented by formula (1):



wherein each of R_5 to R_8 represents hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkyl group, or a C1-C3 alcohol group; and a plurality of Xs may be the same or different from one another, and the compositional proportions of the monomer units falling within the following ranges: $2 \text{ mol\%} \leq l \leq 73 \text{ mol\%}$; $8 \text{ mol\%} \leq m \leq 83 \text{ mol\%}$; and $15 \text{ mol\%} \leq n \leq 80 \text{ mol\%}$,

which method comprises adding glycidyl (meth)acrylate in a predetermined amount to a copolymer comprising at least (meth)acrylic acid and at least one of 2-hydroxyethyl (meth)acrylate ^{and/or} polyoxyethylene mono(meth)acrylate.

4. A method of producing a polymer compound according to claim 3, wherein at least one of an N-nitrosophenylhydroxylamine ammonium salt and 4-hydroxy-2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-oxyl is employed as a polymerization inhibitor.

5. A photosensitive composition containing, as a component, a polymer compound as recited in claim 1.

6. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5, which contains water as a solvent.

7. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5, which contains a polymerizable monomer.

8. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5,
which contains a colorant.

9. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5,
which contains at least one of a photopolymerization
initiator and a photosensitizer.

10. A pattern formation method comprising forming a coating film by use of a photosensitive composition as recited in claim 5 and developing by use of water; i.e., a neutral developer.